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ABSTRACT

This paper describes a workshop that involves a holistic model for career and lifework planning and a training resource for increasing competency using the Internet for career related job search activity. "Life Work Transitions.com: Putting Your Spirit Online" and its companion Web site offer career changers as well as career counselors an integrated approach that balances spiritual awareness and technology, while addressing the practical issues of retention and loyalty. The literature used within the workshop is discussed. Career counselors will find the wide range of Internet resources and suggestions for use a valuable source. "Finding Your True North" is the core four-part model for making positive centered life-enhancing career choices. The four parts consist of: analyzing and discovering what skills, knowledge, and abilities we possess; identifying where our best work can be done (working conditions); selecting criteria for describing who are our best colleagues, customers, etc.; and defining purpose and rewards that describe why we do what we do. The nine steps for using the Internet to find your dream job are described. (MKA)

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Mastering Life Work Transitions: Using the Internet to Find Your Dream Job

by

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Mastering Life Work Transitions: Using the Internet to Find Your Dream Job

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A new holistic model for Career and Lifework Planning and a training resource for increasing competency using the Internet for career related job search activity is offered in this workshop. The authors and presenters, Deborah L. Knox and Sandra S. Butzel in *Life Work Transitions.com: Putting Your Spirit Online*, and its companion website <http://www.lifeworktransitions.com> offer career changers as well as career counselors an integrated approach that balances spiritual awareness and technology, while addressing the practical issues of retention and loyalty.

What's New?

An introductory essay which appears as Part One: Putting Your Spirit to Work in the 21st Century" addresses many of the concerns facing today's workers, both employers and employees. The "new employment contract" offers tips on how to thrive and survive in today's workplace. The necessity for redefining work is taken up further as a new generation of workers asks themselves questions about the meaning and purpose of work. In addition, four motivational models are included to provide guideposts for defining the essence of one's spirit. Each tool in and of itself can offer profound insight to the individual depending upon their particular orientation.

William Bridges' three stage model of Transitions includes the *Ending Phase, the Neutral Zone, and New Beginnings.* Individuals will proceed through the self-assessment process with greater ease once they have completed some of the emotional work associated with each of the three stages. One must acknowledge loss to be ready to move forward with a sense of hope.

The work of Abraham Maslow is included as a reminder of the many diverse needs that work can meet, from survival to belonging to self-actualization. The underutilization of one's innate talents and capabilities can lead to stress and illness. According to Maslow, "capacities clamor to be used...not only is it fun to use our capacities, but it is also necessary for growth." The characteristics of the self-actualized person on the other hand provide a model for health and well being in general, which is especially necessary in today's workforce.

To deepen the holistic approach, a review of Carolyn Myss' work on the seven chakras is included with a review of the corresponding energies. This body-centered awareness provides an additional means of centering in order to conduct a thorough self-assessment as well as being present to explore the wonderful world of work.

A first release of the Nine Stages of Career Development, by Robert J. Ginn, former director of Career Services at Harvard University, is included as a guide for achieving personal growth and vocational authenticity. The various stages and phases of growth, provide a roadmap to experiencing greater joy through work. As each of the models provides another means of self-assessment, one will find this fully integrated holistic approach perfect for conducting the subsequent inner and outer exploration.

Merging the Spiritual and Technical

Career counselors will find the wide range of Internet resources and suggestions for use an invaluable resource. Part Two, The Beginners Guide to the Internet offers basic information about easily getting online, explaining basic search techniques using the familiar FAQ format. Even experienced users have discovered invaluable tips for increasing their efficiency in conducting online searches. With over 150 websites hotlinked to the companion website, it is easy for a new career counselor to bookmark one site and then easily access several favorites. It's not necessary to become an Internet guru to use the Internet successfully in your career practice. Based on a thorough internal process of self-assessment and access to the most comprehensive Internet sites, individuals can now find their dream job using the Internet.

Part Four, "Putting Your Spirit to Work in the Marketplace: Making the Connection" reminds us all that for every idea there is a universe of work. This concept matches one of the self-assessment exercises, which asks people to identify "what needs doing in your world." The redefinition of work will arise from the individual completing the self-assessment process and then using the power of the Internet and the Nine Steps for Identifying Options. These steps are the same for the three stages designated to explore career options, which lead to landing the dream job using the Internet.

Stage One consists of "Getting the Lay of the Land" which involves exploring career options and fields, highlighting relevant (to the individual) characteristics that will lead to "good matches." It is a general sorting, matching and exploring process that answers the question "what is out there?" using the power of the internet. The systematic nine step process will lead the individual to the next stage where "Verifying Your Interest" is the task designed to help narrow the search. During this round of information gathering, individuals will deepen their understanding and knowledge of the right fit. Tips on effective informational interviewing are provided augmented with websites, chat rooms and discussion groups. And last but not least, the third stage is Getting the Job and this involves conducting specific company research, tips for putting your resume on line, the best online sites for posting resumes while balancing internet search techniques with the tried and true methods of job search activity. (The Nine Steps in each phase are outlined at the end of this paper.)

The Four Part Model for Finding Your True North

In order to successfully conduct research in the outer world of work, one must undergo a metaphorical journey described as "Finding Your True North." This assessment consists of 20 simple assessment exercises in the book and online that have been successfully used in the authors' practice for 20 years. Responses to the exercises provide insight, clarity and awareness of the process involved in making effective decisions. Specific information is used to create a personal *mandala* that represents a holistic vision of desired working conditions, values and

beliefs. This journey of "finding your true north" is then translated into a specific Life Work Objective, which can easily be researched using the companion website, http://www.lifeworktransitions.com, with over 150 pre-screened and hot-linked websites.

"Finding Your True North" is the core four-part model for making positive centered life-enhancing career choices. The four parts consist of:

1. Analyzing and discovering WHAT skills, knowledge and abilities we possess;
2. Identifying WHERE our best work can be done (working conditions);
3. Selecting criteria for describing WHO are our best colleagues, customers, etc.; and
4. Defining purpose and rewards that describe WHY we do what we do.

A thorough exploration of each of the quadrants in the four-part model will provide the reader with information to make meaningful choices about a multitude of options. In order to be in charge of our compromises we must first be clear about critical criteria for success. Whether the decision is about a career change, a job offer or even volunteering to work on a project, information gathered from the "four part model" provides insight to selecting work related experiences that expand the individual portfolio in meaningful ways that contribute to career development.

The authors "diamond approach" to career lifework planning consists of completing in-depth research on an internal (personal) level and then researching the world of work to discover where there is a best fit between the four quadrants. Skills and knowledges match up with various careers and functions. Preferred environment and working conditions reflect the structure and practices of various career fields. The values identified as important in your life and work can be found by interviewing colleagues and clients from the perspective of enhancing your profile, as you deepen your understanding of the field. And finally, the purpose and rewards that are meaningful can be explored systematically by discussing the organization's mission and vision with prospective employers.

Using the Internet to Find Your Dream Job

Using the book's companion website, http://www.lifeworktransitions.com, readers will learn the three phases of job search activity while mastering the 9 steps for identifying options using the internet. As indicated earlier, the 3 stages of exploration, using these 9 steps will result in effective targeting of options and the final selection of the dream job.

Step One. Review Personal *Mandala* and Life Work Objective for clues about where interests, skills and values intersect with the world of work.

Step Two. Cast a wide net to explore industries, such as Health, Education, Manufacturing, Leisure, Self-Improvement, etc. A good place to start is to print out the page listing at http://dir.yahoo.com/Business_and_Economy/Companies and study it carefully.

Step Three. Review information from assessment and interest sites and find matches. In addition to the overall self-assessment, the results of Holland's Career Interest Game, at http://www.missouri.edu/~cppcwww/holland.shtml can then be explored with corresponding occupational titles at http://www.doi.gov/octc/typescar.html. At this point the user may feel

quite comfortable with newly identified areas of interest, and more research can only increase confidence.

Step Four. To further refine your understanding of the targeted world of work, look at definitions of Career Fields and Vocations. Two excellent resources are http://www.uhs.berkeley.edu/careerlibrary/links/career.cfm and http://www.jobsmart.org/tools/career/spec-car.htm. Most of the career sites are free and have a slightly different orientation, but work together as a cross-reference.

Step Five. For specific information about different job titles, type in the title in a Career Search window on any Career Search Home Page (Monster. Careerpath.com, etc).

Step Six. In order to discover whether there is a match of values and interests with your newly selected profession, go to http://www.ipl.org/re/AON and you will find relevant information about the field in general and specifics about local meetings.

Step Seven. The professional journals and magazines are the resource used by those in a specific industry to stay current. You will be amazed at the number of listing located at http://www.ecola.com/.

Step Eight. To find out about educational requirements and certificate programs that can provide an edge of credibility for career changers, go to any university and type in the name and .edu (http://www.harvard.edu). As you look at the course offerings in the field under consideration are you excited about learning? Trust yourself; if it seems interesting and confirms other information you are on the right track.

Step Nine. Identifying specific companies and organizations that provide opportunities for employment can now specify the Life Work Objective further. The best site is to go to the organization's web page and look at employment opportunities. Jobsmart's company information page and Hoovers.com provide a broad database for exploration.

Following the practical steps of inner and outer exploration, mastering lifework transitions becomes a way of life for the ever-changing nature of the world of work in the 21st century.